PALESTINE SOLIDARITY Newsletter

International Committee of Solidarity with the Palestinian People.
Vol. 1, No. 5, May 1980

SELF-DETERMINATION, YES! AUTONOMY, NO!

Premier Menachem Begin's recent announcement that his and President Sadat's "pilgrimage" to Washington has produced an agreement on "marathon" talks, with full U.S. participation, to settle the problem of "autonomy" for the West Bank and Gaza Strip, is hardly the magic formula for peace in the Middle East.

The three parties to the Camp David accords, Egypt, Israel and the U.S.A., should have realised by now, after all their jiving and hedging, that peace will continue to elude them as long as they insist on ignoring the key issue to peace in the Middle East – the national rights of the Palestinian people.

Dimming peace prospects

No talks, however, "marathon' or "sprint", in either Egypt or Israel, or in Washington, will get them any nearer to their hotly pursued goal of imposing on the Palestinians a bantustan-type sham settlement. Their macabre dance, if their pathetic performance can be called so, is only aggravating an already deteriorated situation and dimming all prospects for a peaceful settlement of the Middle East conflict.

The "autonomy" talks have, by all standards, failed impressively. In fact, they were doomed to this unflattering end, before they even started, not because of lack of "good-will" on the part of the participants, but primarily because their starting-point was totally wrong, to say the least.

Issue at stake

The issue at stake is not by any means "autonomy" or "self-administration", or any other fancy concept that can be concocted to camouflage the colonialist nature of the Camp David plan. The Palestine question cannot, and should not be reduced to such measly proportions, if a genuine just peace is to prevail in the Middle East.

The Palestine question is and will remain, until appropriately solved, a question of self-determination, independence, and statehood for nearly 4 million people who have been deprived of this right for 32 years. The passage of time and the length of occupation cannot alter this fact; they can only prolong the sufferings and agony of the peoples of the region.

Premier Begin's belief, shared by his two other Camp David partners, that their manoeuvering may still be successful if they rely on more repression, aggression and other similar worn-out methods, is ill-founded and ill-conceived. The fate of many another occupying power should have driven this lesson home. If, however, it did not, as it seems, then the realities in the occupied territories, and of the Palestinian people in general, will do so more clearly and definitely more harshly.

Over 13 years of Israeli unrestrained terror in the occupied territories and beyond, has not succeeded in breaking down Palestinian resistance to occupation; and all methods used by Premier Begin, and other Israeli rulers before him, have boomeranged. The resistance has sharpened and the determination of the Palestinians has become firmer. In addition, 32 years of Palestinian "diaspora", to borrow an Israeli expression, not only has been unable to

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Israeli soldiers occupy a Palestinian refugee camp in the West Bank. (See inside special report on Palestinian children under Israeli occupation)

THE AUTONOMY PLAN: PERPETUATION OF OCCUPATION

The Israeli daily, *The Jerusalem Post*, published in January 1980 a summary of the autonomy plan for the West Bank and Gaza Strip which it said was based on a 26-page plan made public by the Israeli government.

The plan divides powers and responsibilities in the occupied territories into several categories, with Israel retaining what is called "residual" powers. The powers and responsibilities as well as activities which Israel intends to retain in its hands include: internal security; foreign affairs and defence; Israeli settlements and inhabitants in the occupied territories; state, land and natural resources, including water and energy; printing of stamps and currency; radio, television and information; aerospace supervision; supervision of territorial seas; main international communication exchanges; internal telex, international mail; supervision of Israeli banking and insurance institutions in the occupied territories; and representation of the local banking system abroad.

These powers, *The Jerusalem Post* stressed, were examples of what Israel wanted to reserve for itself, and did not constitute the final list which is much bigger.

The Palestinians in the occupied territories are

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stamp out Palestinian national identity; on the contrary, it has strengthened and deepened the Palestinians' sense of belonging and attachment to their homeland.

Nothing New

In this case what can the "marathon talks" provide that has not been already tried and failed, particularly that they continue to be based on the same old colonial concept – negation of the national rights of the Palestinian people.

The autonomy plan worked out by Israel, which Egypt and the U.S.A. accept in principle, but say they disagree with some of its details, offers the Palestinians nothing in exchange for their national rights. It provides Israel with:

– Full military control over the occupied territories;

– Continued colonialist settlement anywhere in the occupied territories;

– Continued control over all natural resources, including the scarce water resources, in the occupied territories; and

– Continued annexation of East Jerusalem (see details elsewhere in this issue).

Premier Begin left no room for doubt as to the aim of this plan when he said that it is an autonomy for the population, not the land, and that "autonomy" applied only to the present inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza Strip and not to the nearly 3 million other Palestinians driven from their homes and presently scattered around the world.

Thinking Like an Israeli

President Carter's concepts are no less explicit: Israeli Labour Party leader Shimon Peres told the press after meeting the U.S. President. "Carter thinks like an Israeli on four issues: the need for a unified Jerusalem; his opposition to an independent Palestinian state, his opposition to negotiations with the Palestine Liberation Organisation and the need for strict adherence to the Camp David accords." **(International Herald Tribune, April 26–27, 1980).**

President Sadat, firmly committed to the Camp David accords, does not object to the essence of the plan, but is concerned over such details as who is to control water resources and what should be the status of the inhabitants of East Jerusalem, not that of the city itself. In his hurry to reach an agreement, he proposes that all such details be settled in later negotiations between the inhabitants of the West Bank and Gaza Strip and the Israelis.

Palestinians' Answer

The Palestinians have on more than one occasion rejected the plan and its approach. PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat called the Camp David accords and the autonomy plan "garbage" and a "new form of slavery". "The Israelis have control of everything, even the sources of water. Give me an example anywhere in the world where a village does not control its own drinking water," Arafat told the U.S. weekly **Time Magazine** (April 14, 1980).

Chairman Arafat, expressing the feeling of Palestinians, charged that autonomy is a transparent facade designed for the perpetuation of occupation and for changing the demographic and geographic nature of the West Bank and Gaza Strip in preparation for their final annexation.

"We have rejected the Camp David and autonomy plan and we will continue to resist until we are able to live freely in our own homeland", he said.

The population in the West Bank and Gaza Strip in saying "No to autonomy" have reiterated Chairman Arafat's position. The hundreds of meetings, and demonstrations held and statements issued in the occupied territories throughout the period that has passed since the Camp David accords spell the message loudly and clearly: nothing short of self-determination.

"Our people totally reject the autonomy plan as a principle," Mayor of Nablus Bassam Al-Shaka'ah told the London-based magazine **The Middle East** (March, 1980).

In the Gaza Strip, a proposal by President Sadat to quicken the pace of the implementation of the Camp David accords by putting the autonomy plan into practice first in the Gaza Strip was totally rejected. A statement by leading figures and representatives of all organisations in the Strip said, "We reject and condemn Sadat's proposal... and consider it aimed at dividing our people. We emphatically state that the Palestinian people are one and indivisable and that the PLO is its sole legitimate leadership."

An Archaic Concept

Israelis who have never been sympathetic to, let alone supported, the Palestinians, have also started to sense that nothing can be achieved through the "autonomy talks", which are leading to a dead end. A prominent member of Israel's establishment and leading historian, Prof. Yacob Talmon of Jerusalem's Hebrew University, described, in **Ha'aretz**, the autonomy idea as "an archaic concept, a trick to shut the Gentile's mouth." Limited autonomy, as envisaged by the plan, had never worked in the past, Talmon argued and charged that the government's territorial and settlement policy was corrupting the Israelis.

Several other Israeli papers, including the daily, **Davar**, questioned the reason for continuing the talks. **Ha'aretz** said that there should be no wonder that world public opinion has adopted a suspicious attitude toward the Israeli autonomy plan.

Self-determination – the answer

It is clearly eyident that the people most concerned, the Palestinians, will not accept the autonomy plan as it exists or yet a modified version of it. The only logical course left for the Camp David partners, if logic is to guide their actions, is to fold up their operation and call it quits.

The solution to the whole Middle East crisis lies somewhere else, in what Egypt, Israel and the U.S. have altogether ignored during their wasted chatter, if what they have been doing can be called even that. It lies in the long overdue implementation of the United Nations resolutions, the only serious guarantee for a just and durable peace in the Middle East.

The U.N. General Assembly has in its resolution No. 3236 (1974) reaffirmed "the inalienable rights of the Palestinian People in Palestine, including:

a) The right to self-determination without external interference;

b) The right to national independence and sovereignty", and has reaffirmed also "the inalienable right of the Palestinians to return to their homes and property from which they have been displaced and uprooted."

It is in this direction alone that world public opinion should exert its energies, because this is the only way certain to lead to peace. The Camp David accords, the autonomy plan and all other similar schemes are self-defeating and have led to the same deadend; in spite of all the tinkering done to make them effective.

Only a concerted worldwide action by peoples everywhere can secure this speedy solution which provides peace, justice and security for all. Let us mount it!

"Since the problem of Palestine is at the very crux of the Middle East conflict, it would appear to us to be unrealistic to seek to solve it in a way that ignored the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people...

"Israel not only enjoys its national rights, but indeed, continually misuses them by illegally occupying Arab territories in violation of every principle of *just gentium*, of the United Nations Charter and of pertinent (UN) resolutions."

Ambassador Falilou Kane,
Chairman, UN Committee on the Exercise
of the Inalienable Rights of the
Palestinian People, before the
Security Council
(March 31, 1980)

Diary of Repression

Israeli repression in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip has increased with the acceleration of the Egyptian – Israeli "autonomy" talks under the auspicies of the United States. The occupation authorities in an attempt to stamp out opposition to the "autonomy" plan have stepped up their arrests, brutality and settlement of Israelis in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The expropriation of Arab land and the setting up of Israeli colonial settlements are rapidly creating "new realities" in order to make withdrawal from the occupied territories impossible and to prevent the creation of a Palestinian state.

There must be more concerted public action around the world to closely monitor Israeli practices in the occupied territories and immediately denounce all violations as they occur, if Israel's violations of the human rights of Palestinians – occupation itself being the most serious – are to be checked.

The *Palestine Solidarity Newsletter* has been able to record the following list of violations of human rights in the occupied territories during the month of April 1980. Although the list is far from complete, yet it should spur public opinion to act without delay to force Israel to respect the Geneva Convention on the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War (1949).

Time Magazine map showing existing and planned Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank.

ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS AND LAND EXPROPRIATION

• The U.S. weekly *Time Magazine* (April 14, 1980), published a detailed map of present-day and planned Israeli settlement in the West Bank which shows that 64 settlements have already been established and 60 others are planned. 39 of the existing ones have been established by the Begin government. *Time* revealed that Israel has "expropriated over roughly 30% of the West Bank's 2,200 sq.miles, incluiding some of the most fertile farm land in the Jordan Valley... (and) a $ 300 million housing project for 20,000 Israelis is currently being built on the top of Mount Ma'ale Adumin thereby completing the encirclement of Jerusalem."

The aim of the settlements, the magazine added, is "to neutralize the West Bank, politically and militarily, by turning its major Arab population centres into little Bantustans surrounded by Jewish settlements."

At the same time the Israeli press, mainly the Hebrew daily Ma'arev, revealed what it called "a security plan", to "isolate refugee camps from main roads" by diverting roads away from the camps.

• A new Israeli settlement was started in Aqbat Jaber, on agricultural land belonging to a refugee camp on the outskirts of the town of Jericho in the West Bank.

• More than 400 dunums (100 acres) cultivated by barley, wheat and olive trees near Al-Khalil (Hebron) were sprayed by defoliants, according to an announcement by the Israeli Government. The sprayed land belongs to the occupied villages of Dura, Idhna and Yatta. The Mayor of Halhoul, Mohammed Hassan Melhim, contested the size of the area sprayed saying that thousands of dunums were affected and that the crops were completely destroyed. Earlier in 1972, Israel sprayed the land belonging to Akraba village, near Nablus, with defoliants, prior to its expropriation.

• The Mayor of Tallouza in the West Bank was notified by the authorities that a 1000-dunum area (250 acres) belonging to 17 families in the village was expropriated. Earlier 500 other dunums of the village land had also been expropriated.

• 5740 dunums (1435 acres) of fertile land in the West Bank owned by thousands of villagers were earmarked for expropriation. The inhabitants of several villages including those of Beit Hanina, Al-Dahriya, Beit Kahel, Azzoun, Al-Zawiya, and Siniria, were ordered to present documents proving their ownership of land in these localities. The authorities, however, refused to recognize ownership documents issued by the land registary office prior to occupation.

HARASSMENT OF REFUGEE CAMPS

• Two refugee camps in the West Bank, Al-Jalazun and Al-Dheisha, were selected for special harassment and reprisals during the first part of April.

Al-Jalazun camp has been under constant curfew for two months: all its houses have been searched regularly by the Israeli army. But on the afternoon of April 5, a new wave of terror was unleashed against the inhabitants. A huge army force surrounded the camp, ordered its inhabitants to gather in a square and conducted a thorough house to house search, arresting 450 persons including 10-year – old children. The arrested persons were held in the courtyard of the Military Governor's headquarters without food or water for more than two days, and were released only after a sitdown strike was staged by their families at Al-Beirah municipality and the Mayor intervened with the Military Governor.

The Israeli Hebrew daily *Ha'aretz* (April 10, 1980) described the treatment of the arrested persons as follows: "The soldiers humiliated them and brutally beat them up despite the fact that there were among them, children of 10 and 14 years. Some young men complained later that they were ordered to clean the headquarters of the Military Governor, and when they finished the job, the soldiers poured water on the floor and made them fall in it. They were forbidden to go to the toiletts and kept without food and water."

Another Israeli paper, *Al-Ittihad*, (April 11, 1980) reported that the inhabitants of the camp complain that the authorities regularly arrest tens of persons and take them from the camp to clean Ramallah prison and the Military Governor's headquarters.

Al-Ittihad returned in a later number (April 15, 1980) to the situation in the camp. It said that the all-day and all-night curfew which continues to be imposed on the camp, has led t

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the loss of 480 thousand working hours for nearly 2000 workers from the camp and an income of 24 million Israeli liras (US $ 1 = 42 Israeli liras). The army, it said, has destroyed furniture, smashed glass and even burned down houses, in addition to destroying crops. Army check-points still exist in the camp and armed soldiers patrol it day and night.

The entrances on the main roads to Al-Dheisha refugee camp, near Bethlehem have been sealed off, and the camp has also been subjected to the same treatment as Al-Jalazoun.

The justification for this terror? According to the authorities, youngsters have thrown stones at Israeli colonial settlers' cars passing the camps. However, Israeli press reports indicate that the authorities want the inhabitants to evacuate the camps so that the land can be expropriated.

ACTIONS AGAINST MUNICIPALITIES

• Continuing its persecution of elected Palestinian officials, on April 2 the authorities arrested the Mayor of Qabatya in the West Bank, Mr. Khaled Awwad Yassin Al-Ouni, and charged him with calling for a strike on March 30 (the Land Day). He was later released on bail. The Israeli paper *Al-Ittihad* (April 8, 1980), dismissed the charge, saying that the arrest was part of Israel's continued efforts to harass and intimidate the patriotic forces in the occupied territories and to "prevent Mayors opposed to occupation from nominating themselves in future municipal elections." (The law forbids any person sentenced by court to hold any public office).

• The occupation authorities have postponed the municipal elections in the West Bank indefinitely. They were due to take place in April.

• The Military Governor of the West Bank ordered all funds of the West Bank municipalities seized on the pretext that the municipalities have not collected income and property taxes from the inhabitants for the occupation authorities. The order was issued despite the fact that the law specifically states that income and property tax collection is the sole responsibility of the Taxation Department and not the municipalities. The seizure was contested by the lawyers of the municipalities.

ACTIONS AGAINST TRADE UNIONS

• The Military Governor of the West Bank, Benyamin Ben Eleizer issued on March 20, 1980, order No. 825 ammending article 83 of the Jordanian labour law, in effect in the West Bank. The new order curtailing the freedom of trade unions gives the occupation authorities the right to control and interfere in the elections of trade unions. The following is a summary of the provisions of the new order:

a – Thirty days prior to elections names of all candidates must be submitted for approval by the authorities;

b – The government registrar of trade unions has the right to object to and delete the name of any candidate he deems undesirable;

c – Any person who has been sentenced to five years' imprisonment, regardless of the reasons, is not allowed to stand for elections;

d – Any person who has been sentenced to three years' imprisonment on a moral charge is not allowed to stand for election;

e – Any violation of the above provisions of the order will cause all decisions or election results by trade unions to be declared null and void; and

f – The government registrar of trade unions is empowered to approve or reject the results of trade union elections.

Commenting on the order, the Israeli daily *Ha'aretz* (April 14, 1980), admitted that the authorities want to "weed" all the anti-occupation elements out of the trade unions in the West Bank.

In the meantime the Executive of the General Federation of Trade Unions in the West Bank protested against the order saying that the Israeli authorities are violating international conventions which forbid the amendment or changing of laws in an occupied territory by an occupying power. It also charged that the order is "naked intervention in the internal affairs of trade unions."

PERSECUTION OF STUDENTS

• Israeli soldiers brutally attacked (April 10) students in Ramallah, Al-Beirah, Abu Deis and Beir Zeit. The soldiers used trencheons, tear gas bombs and knives against students, who were commemorating the 32nd anniversary of the massacre in 1948 of 254 (by UN forces count) women, children and men by armed Israelis of the Stern and Etsel groups. (The latter was under the command of the present Israeli Prime Minister, Menachem Begin). The massacre is known as the Deir Yassin massacre.

The Israeli soldiers' attack against the students on April 10 resulted in the hospitalisation of 15 students with broken ribs and limbs; and the arrest of 43 others.

Israeli press reports of the attack provides the following picture of what happened:

Ramallah: Students at the UNRWA's Teachers' Training College for men held a meeting in memory of Deir Yassin's massacre. They raised slogans against occupation and demanded the establishment of an independent sovereign Palestinian state led by the PLO. The army invaded the College, fired in the air, pulled down a hoisted Palestinian flag and beat up the students. Some students were even stabbed by soldiers weilding knives. Tear gas bombs were thrown in the midst of the assembly and teachers were locked for two hours in the staff room. A room by room search of the college was conducted and furniture and equipment smashed.

Israeli soldiers also forcibly entered the Teachers Training College for Girls on the same day; and brutally dispersed a similar meeting of the student body. Several girl students were beaten and injured.

Abu Deis: On the same day, the Israeli army surrounded the building of the Science Faculty of Abu Deis Arab Institute where over 1,000 students were staging a sit-in strike against the closure of the faculty. (The faculty was ordered closed by the military governor in March because "there was no need for more faculties.") Solidarity delegations of mayors and students from other colleges were barred from entering, and the military governor, accompanied by soldiers, invaded the faculty and threatened the students, stating he would use force if they did not promptly leave the building. He tore down a hoisted Palestinian flag. The names of 120 students were taken down by the army for later reprisals.

Beir Zeit: Radio Israel reported that students at Beir Zeit University demonstrated in protest against the Israeli army raid against students in Ramallah. Israeli soldiers beat up the students and dispersed the demostration by force. Three students – Mufid Abd Rabbo, Hassan Abdullah and Issam Arouri were arrested. Twenty other students were held for a few hours, interrogated and beaten.

This brutality of the Israeli soldiers provoked a total student strike at the university on april 14.

Bethlehem: Students of Bethlehem University observed a one-day strike on April 14 in protest against the arrest of 21 of their colleagues. Requests by the Mayors of Bethlehem and Beit Sahour failed to release the students.

• The secondary school in the village of Safa has remained closed since mid-March by orders of the occupation authorities. The school was closed as a result of student protest against the closure of several educational institutions in the West Bank.

• Atef Jamal Sa'ad, the Vice-President of the Student Council at Al-Najah University, Nablus, was arrested on April 7, after a student meeting on the University campus, protesting the establishment of an Israeli colonial settlement in Al-Khalil (Hebron).

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PRISONS, ARREST AND DEPORTATION

• Palestinian prisoners in Beersheba's desert prison declared an open general strike on April 13 in protest against their inhuman treatment by the prison administration. The prisoners said in their announcement that prison guards regularly brutalise them and that their lives are endangered by total absence of medical care.

Over 150 Palestinians are incarcerated in Beersheba's fortress-like desert prison. On several occasions they have protested the inhuman conditions to which they are subjected, demanding improvement of medical care, treatment by guards and food. In 1977 they staged two general strikes, one of them lasting 45 days. The strikes were stopped after promises by prison administration which never materialised.

In early April it was learned that a Palestinian prisoner in Beersheba Mustapha Samara, is suffering from a paralysed pelvis after a hernia operation. His wound is still open despite the fact that the operation was performed three months ago. No medical care is given to him.

Another prisoner, Abdel Razzak Qutub, is reported in a critical state of health since his transfer to Beersheba from Ramlah prison. After a recent visit to the prison members of his family say that he is suffering from several ailments which have become chronic due to the lack of medical care.

• An Israeli officer and group of ten soldiers on April 3 beat up Dr. Ahmed Hamza Al-Natshe and his French wife in a Hebron street while both were speaking to foreign journalists. Both were wounded and required medical treatment. At 11.00 p.m. the same night he was arrested and interrogated and only released into the custody of the Mayor of Bethlehem.

Dr. Al-Natshe is a prominent surgeon and a Director of Bethlehem's Hospital. He was a candidate for the post of Mayor of Hebron during the 1976 municipal elections, but was deported from the occupied territories a few days before the elections. He was allowed to return only after a determined struggle by the people of the occupied territories.

Lawyer Felicia Langer petitioned the Israeli High Court in the early hours of April 4 to stop any plans the authorities may have for the deportation of Dr. Al-Natshe.

Dr. Al-Natshe protested to Israeli Defence Minister, Ezer Weizman, against the attack on him and his wife and demanded punishment of those responsible, and an end to his harassment.

• Palestinian writer Mohammed Ayyoub was arrested in early April in Gaza and held without being charged. In a statement he issued from his prison he said that this is the second time he has been arrested in one year, without being charged, and that his second arrest is due to his being elected headman (Mukhtar) of the refugees from Jaffa living in Gaza.

• Heavily armed Israeli soldiers attacked the village of Beit Sureik, near Jerusalem, on April 11. Tens of men, women and children were beaten up and several were arrested. The Israeli authorities intend to expropriate land belonging to the village.

• Three professors at the Faculty of Science of Abu Deis Arab Institute (closed by order of the authorities) were ordered deported from the West Bank. The three are Palestinians from the West Bank. They are: Dr. Ahmed Sei'dan (Dean of the faculty), Dr. Mohammed Wasfi Al-Kafri and Dr. Mohammed Arafat Al-Natshe.

• An Easter procession of 5000 persons in Ramallah was attacked by Israeli armed soldiers who fired in the air, used tear gas bombs and beat up the marchers. The attack turned the procession into a political demonstration, with slogans shouted against occupation, the Camp David accords and in support of the PLO. Several persons were arrested.

TERROR IN AL-KHALIL

After the Israeli government decided to colonise the occupied Arab town of Al-Khalil (Hebron) in the West Bank, an unprecedented terror was unleashed against the inhabitants of the town, in which the Israeli armed forces and the extreme right wing Gush Emunim gangs fully cooperated.

On April 2, the army declared the town closed and surrounded its municipal hall and the headquarters of all public organisations to prevent the holding of protest meetings. The Israeli army stopped solidarity delegations from other cities and towns in the occupied territories and from Israel itself from entering the town and turned them back. Only three members of Parliament of the Democratic Front for Peace and Equality, Meir Vilner, Tawfiq Toubi and Charlie Baton, forced their way into the town despite army protests. But despite the terror, the inhabitants prevented members of the extreme right-wing Gush Emunim and Rabbi Meir Kahane's Jewish Defense League from holding a procession in the town.

Earlier, in February, a 12-day curfew was imposed on the town, and very few details of the brutality commited by the Israeli army filtered out. Only recently did knowledge of what took place leak out after deputies of the Israeli Democratic Front for Peace and Equality raised the question in the Israeli Knesset (Parliament).

Speaking on behalf of the Front Meir Vilner told the Knesset:

"What happened to the residents of Hebron during the 12-day curfew and the acts of maltreatment carried on by the army and the gangsters of Gush Emunim are shocking... During curfew nights, a deputy commander of Hebron, named Baruch – his family name is neither known to the residents nor to the mayor – used to gather groups of residents from Hebron and order them, neither more nor less "I say: You are donkeys – answer: 'Yes'," When they did not respond, he sent soldiers to beat them until they answered: 'Yes'. He contined: "You are dogs" and did not give up until he made them, under the extremely cold night weather and the blows of soldiers, to respond with "Yes". Who ever did not respond with "Yes" was brutally beaten."

Several Israeli newspapers reported individual cases of brutality during that period. *Haaretz* (February 4, 1980) said:

"So far no interrogation was carried out in the case of Jadallah Ja'abari, a 70-year-old resident of Hebron who two days ago (during the days of curfew) lost his sight as a result of being hit by a club carried by persons from Kiryat Arba' who broke into his house. This man has completely lost the sight in one eye as a result of the blows he received. Jadallah Ja'abari was wounded in the areas of his eye, forehead and back. He said that two days ago, three Kiryat Arba' residents broke into his house and one of them a tall strongly – built man hit him unprovoked ruthlessly with a club over his eye."

Al-Hamishmar (February 4,, 1980) wrote: "Not far from Kiryat Arba' and in the house of the family of Idris, the settlers broke all the window glass and are harassing the residents of the quarter. Settlers from Kiryat Arba' have also beaten residents of Hebron. During curfew the soldiers beat the population of the town."

Yediot Ahronot (February 3, 1980) also wrote: "A number of Kiryat Arba' residents broke into a shoe store in the quarter of Jabal Rahma in Hebron, and broke window glass and scattered the commodities... Kiryat Arba' residents threw stones at Arab houses near Kiryat Arba' breaking their glass windows. During the whole day yesterday, armed young men from Kiryat Arba' marched in groups through the streets of Hebron in order to demonstrate their presence. Israeli soldiers confined themselves to merely watching their movements in order to prevent an outbreak of violance."

Davar (February 6, 1980) wrote:

"During the curfew hours, unidentified persons broke into the cave of Machpelah and into the room of a Muslem sheikh in charge of this place. They destroyed furniture, damaged a Koran book (the Moslems holy book), the electricity network and the microphones used by the Imam (religious leader). An unidentified person threw sand on the mosque's carpet and water on a Koran book. After that the guard found that the electricity wires were cut in the Imam's room and the microphone he uses has disappeared."

Al-Ittihad (February 12, 1980) wrote editorially:

"The events which took place during the 12-day curfew which was imposed on Hebron have brought to memory the Berlin "Crystel Night"."

On June 1 the world observes International Children's Day, reminding us all that children need the security, care and joy, to which their young years entitle them. A group of children, however, that cries out for special attention is the Palestinian children under Israeli occupation, who are deprived of all the basic needs of childhood.

How much does the world know of the plight and sufferings of Palestinian children and what has been done to alleviate their distress? This special report, stark, in its simple truth, on the occasion of International Children's Day provides you with the reality of the conditions of those children. The hope is that you may act without delay to make their childhood free of terror, insecurity and misery.

Palestinian Children under Israeli Occupation

The world of Palestinian children is not a world of sweet dreams, colourful rainbows and carefree games, as it should be. Born into the tragedy of their own people, from the moment of their birth, they have come to experience imposed misery and dispersal in several countries. For those of them who are born under Israeli occupation terror has become synonymous with life.

Israeli army raids against houses in the small hours of the morning, dragging of parents or relatives off to prisons, the sound of automatic gun fire by day and night and being locked up at home deprived of playing outside due to constant curfews, have all become a daily feature of a Paleshinian child's life under occupation.

The sight of Israeli tanks roaring down a street, or the sound of jet fighters breaking the sound barrier or bombing a refugee camp or a town are daily horrifying occurrences for Palestinian children.

Barbed wires blocking a street, sealing off an area or simply preventing entry to one's own house prior to its demolition are practices a Palestinian child experiences before he even learns to walk.

Childhood haunted by fear

This reality has had a damaging effect on the psychology of Palestinian children. An exhibition of Palestinian children's drawings recently organised in the occupied territories best reflect this marred pyschology. The colours were gloomy and dark; drawings depicted only bars, prisons, women crying, naked children, demolished houses, scarred trees and Israeli tanks and truncheons.

An 8 year-old child, asked why he drew a crying woman with a torn dress, simply said, "This is my mother after the Israeli soldiers took my father away".

Estimates indicate that children between the age of 1 and 16 years constitute over 40 percent of Palestinians in the occupied territories. This, by itself, causes limitless worry for the Israeli authorities. The late Israeli Prime Minister, Mrs Golda Meir, was reported in the early seventies to have said that her sleep at night is disturbed by the birth of every Palestinian child. Why? Probably because Mrs Meir did not want Palestinian children to disprove her infamous statement: "There was no such thing as a Palestinian people... They do not exist".

And to prove that Palestinians "do not exist" the life of Palestinian children has been turned into a nightmarish terror, imprisonment, torture, killings and exploitation.

Hundreds of Palestinian children have been killed by Israeli soldiers during raids on refugee camps or schools. Among the many killed are" Rabab Al–saloos (10 years old) who was killed by security police in Nablus at the end of 1974; Omar Hussein Afaneh (11 years old) shot by an Israeli soldier during a demonstration at the end of 1975; Jamil Arafat Al-Zein (6 years old) shot in April 1976; Ahmad Al-Badawi (8 years old) shot in May 1976; Sami Mahmud Haruf (16 years old) shot in 1976; Abdullah Mustapha Hawash (12 years old) shot in 1976; Mohammed Khalil Abu Ghodeib (14 years old) shot in April 1978; Bassam Al-Salahat (15 years old) shot in 1976; Lutfi Husni Youssef (15 years old) shot in 1978; Raaba'a Shalaldeh (17 years) shot in 1979; and Nasri Al-Anani (17 years) shot in 1979.

Hundreds, if not thousands, of others have been maimed for life as a result of the brutality of Israeli soldiers. A most revealing case was the raid on an elementary school, the Beit Jala school, in March 1978, after a wave of demons trations. The Israeli soldiers closed the windows of four classrooms, ordered the pupils to stay in, threw tear gas bombs and locked the doors. Children broke their legs as they jumped, terrified, from third floor windows. Those of them who did not jump, were found unconscious in the class rooms.

An Israeli soldier described the aftermath of their "courageous" raid on the school. He said: "Children were falling into our hands like butterflies attacked by insecticides. They were between 8 and 10 years old. We saw them sitting on the ground with their legs broken after they had jumped from the windows".

Pupils of the Beit Sahour school, near Beit Jala, were exposed to the same treatment.

Imprisonment and Torture

Scores of Palestinian children are daily arrested, dragged to prisons, tortured and sentenced to imprisonment and fines, exactly as if they were grown-ups. This situation is probably responsible for what a Western journalist wrote: "To approach a Palestinian child is a trying experience. He is evasive; stares with big emotionless eyes distrustfully at you not able to decide why you approach him or what you want".

A recent unique ruling by the Israeli High Court, which incidentally violates Israel's own penal code, held a 12 year-old child responsible for his action and required him to stand trial, like a grown-up, for resisting occupation. (Israel's penal code does not hold a minor responsible for his actions and does not require persons less than 16 years old to appear before ordinary courts).

Rough estimates indicate that over 3,000 Palestinian minors appeared before Israeli courts on charges of resisting occupation – participating in demonstrations, writing slogans on walls, raising the Palestinian flag, distributing pamphlets, throwing stones at occupation soldiers and similar activities.

A 1977 memorandum by Israeli lawyer, Mrs Felicia Langer, issued by the Israeli

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PALESTINIAN CHILDREN UNDER ISRAELI OCCUPATION

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League for Human Rights in the wake of demonstrations in the occupied territories, said:

"This was the ninth wave of demonstrations and anyone who has a conscience can realise that the problem can be solved only by granting Palestinians their inalienable rights... I saw children carried away in large numbers to Israeli courts where they were sentenced to imprisonment or payment of fines amounting to thousands of Israeli liras. Those amounts are of course paid by parents who are refugees and also threatened with imprisonment if they do not pay. I saw a number of children with bruised faces (from police beatings) in a military court in Hebron (Al-Khalil). On the same day, I saved a boy who was fainting under the beating of Israeli soldiers in front of the Holy Mosque of Ibrahim in Hebron. I carried the boy to a hospital where doctors poured out their accounts of treating children who were attacked by police dogs.

"In a court in Jerusalem", Mrs Langer continued, "I defended several 13-years-old girls from Kalandia, near Jerusalem, where I listened to a judge lecture about the necessity of locking up those girls for the sake of the security of the State of Israel".

Mrs Langer added: "Prisons are overfilled with children who are beaten harshly even on the way when they are transferred from one prison to another. Lately the Israeli authorities found a new way to prevent children from participating in demonstrations or in other activities to express their rejection of Israeli occupation. Israeli soldiers gather children in a place and beat them harshly. They also frighten them with snakes. In other cases they raid houses at night arresting innocent children, as they did in Balata camp near Nablus".

The memorandum listed the names of 67 pupils arrested and exposed to this treatment.

More recently, tens of children from Al-Jalazoun refugee camp, near Ramallah, were arrested in February 1980 by the Israeli authorities on charges of throwing stones at colonial settlers in a nearby Israeli settlement built on expropriated Arab land. The children were brutally beaten, threatened and held in custody for a week.

After children are arrested, their real ordeal starts. They are treated like the most hardened criminals, subjected to the most brutal and huiniliating methods of torture. It has been verified from children's statements before courts that they are regularly beaten by clubs on the head, feet, sexual organs, stomach and hands; slapped; pulled by their hair; choked by their interrogators; trained dogs set against them; and threatened with being themselves raped, or their mothers and sisters.

Some children who appeared before Israeli courts had the following to say about their treatment by Israeli interrogators:

Ibrahim Abdel Mo'oty (13 years): "I was hit with a stick on my sexual organs, slapped and threatened that my mother and sisters would be raped before me".

Mohammed Ahmed Abdullah Mouzir (13 years): "I was hit on my sexual organs. My head was pushed into an opening in a chair and I was ordered to raise the chair several times. I was pulled by the hair and my head hit on the wall. I was made to sleep on the floor with my face down and my iterrogator stood on my back. I was put for thirteen days in solitary confinement".

Yousef Abdel Rahman (14 years): "I was hit in the stomach and on my legs. I was also hit with a stick on my ears till they bled".

Khaled Mustapha (14 years): "I was severely beaten, put in solitary confinement. Some liquid was injected near my testicles which gave me a terrible pain".

These are but a few of hundreds of stories about torture revealed before Israeli courts; and the torturers identified. But neither was torture stopped, nor torturers punished. The sadistic ritual continues, and Palestinian children continue to be victims of a senseless brutality intent on turning their innocent years into a nightmarish hell.

Recently a Jerusalem daily, **Al-Fajr**, revealed that children are kept as a rule in prisons reserved for grown-ups, in the same cells with hardened criminals. This has led to serious assaults on children with the full knowledge of the prison authorities; but the practice has not stopped and the criminals continue to be encouraged to inflict moral and physical harm on the minors.

The same paper reported that on April 25, 1978, two criminals at Tulkarem prison sexually assaulted a minor kept in the same cell with them. The minor was in prison charged with participating in a demonstration, while one of the criminals was serving a 15-year sentence for having murdered a young boy.

Israeli tanks attack Palestinian refugee camp – Drawing by Palestinian child.

"Justice and Peace" are the demand of Palestinian children.

Child labour

Rafic Halaby, a correspondent for the Israeli television, produced a TV film in August 1978, about Palestinian child labour in Israel, which provoked a strong reaction in non-official circles. A large section of the mass media called the situation "the slavery of children".

More recently, in 1979, a mission of the International Labour Office (ILO) on a visit to the West Bank to study conditions of workers in the occupied territories found that out of more than 20,000 Palestinians illegally employed in Israel, 20 percent were minors exposed to severe exploitation.

Halaby's film was instru-

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PALESTINIAN CHILDREN UNDER ISRAELI OCCUPATION

(continued from page 7)

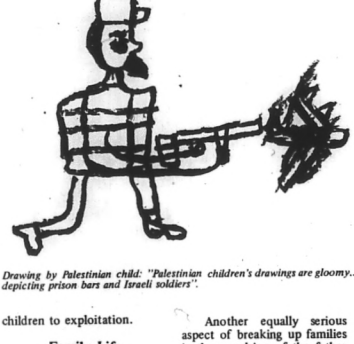
mental in bringing to light facts about involvement of leaders of Israel's government and the Labour Party opposition in the employment and exploitation of Palestinian children. The Minister of Agriculture Ariel Sharon, it was learnt, employed children from Gaza on his private farm. A kibbutz of the opposition Labour Party similarly employed Palestinian children from the West Bank. It was also revealed that the Jewish Agency employed 12 year-old Palestinian girls as cleaners in student hostels in Romema, Haifa; to cite but a few examples.

Those children are exposed to the worst form of exploitation and maltreatment. According to press reports they are locked up by their employers in garages and storerooms to prevent them from escaping. Three such children died as a result of a fire that broke out in a storeroom from which they could not escape.

Children are paid as a rule 30 80 Israeli liras a day (IL 42 = US$ 1), while an adult is generally paid IL 400 a day. In addition, they work up to 14 hours a day. They are gathered from grouping areas referred to by the press as "Slave Markets" at 3.00 a.m. and returned back at 6.00 p.m.

They are paid no overtime nor are they provided with medical or any other care. In a recent case, reported by the Israeli paper, Al-Ittihad, a young boy from Gaza, Salim Abdul Rahman Hamad, was beaten with an iron rod on the head by his Israeli employer because he asked to be paid overtime. The beating caused brain haemorrage and the death of the child.

The appalling conditions of those children have led the ILO mission to propose in its report to the 65th session of the International Labour Conference that Israel strictly observe the non-employment of Palestinian children in its economy and that it pay Arab workers children's allowance to enable families to cope with the increased cost of living without exposing their children to exploitation.



Drawing by Palestinian child: "Palestinian children's drawings are gloomy... depicting prison bars and Israeli soldiers".

Family Life

The primary prerequisite for a child's normal growth and development, an affectionate steady family life, is in most cases denied under Israeli occupation, with one or both parents absent behind the bars of Israeli prisons, in many cases sentenced to long years of incarceration. Hundreds of Palestinian children wake up daily to find themselves in this crippling situation, without one of their parents to guide their early steps in life. Others are born and grow up without having known their imprisoned fathers. Some have been reported to have been born in prison, their mothers having been arrested for "security" reasons.

Out of an estimated 5,000 Palestinian political prisoners in Israeli jails more than half are believed to have children in the prime years of their lives. Some have not even seen their children; others who see them generally do so during the once-a-month half-an-hour visit by family members allowed prisoners, with prison bars or net screens separating the prisoner from his family.

Out of nearly 450 Palestinian women who served prison sentences of over 6 months, 200 are reported to have children from which they were separated.

In some cases a child, and one or both parents, are arrested together, held apart and news of one is denied to the other.

Another equally serious aspect of breaking up families is the expulsion of the father from the occupied territories. Over 1500 such individual cases were reported since the beginning of occupation in 1967. Each one of them has on the average 2 minor children.

If members of a family want to live together with the expelled father, they have to give up their home and right to ever return to the occupied territories and simply leave. This is what Israeli Defence Minister Ezer Weizman recently called as "our keeness on uniting families" when he was asked to explain this inhuman procedure.

Health Care

Although medical services as a whole have deteriorated in the occupied territories since 1967 – as can be seen from reports presented to the World Health Organisation – child medical care, it can be safely said, has been one of the areas most affected.

With the Israeli military authorities responsible for the health services in the occupied territories, paediatric services, according to a report by Dr Samir Katbeh, President of the Medical Association in the West Bank, not only has stagnated, it has seriously deteriorated. This is reflected in the closing down, curtailing, or freezing the growth of paediatric departments in a number of hospitals. The paediatric departments in Ramallah's hospital were curtailed; in Nablus and Hebron hospitals were frozen.

In fact the Ramallah hospital is the only one with a major paediatric department in the West Bank. In one single year it admitted 1200 children with serious ailments and yet its staff is only two doctors and eight nurses.

The result: a serious increase in infant mortality. Official statistics show an increase from 30.7 in 1973 to 38.1 in 1975 per 1000 live births. Present-day figures follow the same trend.

Neonatal deaths (death of infants up to the age of 30 days) have also increased from 238 in 1972 to 303 in 1975; and those from one month to one year have also increased, from 430 in 1972 to 864 in 1975.

Education

That education has been one of the main victims of Israeli occupation is reflected in the sharp decline of the number of children attending schools in the West Bank and Gaza Strip despite a high birth rate during the last 13 years.

A report prepared in the occupied territories for presentation to UNESCO has the following to say:

"The normal growth of the number of Palestinian students has been hampered during Israeli occupation. This is especially true of students in the elementary and preparatory stages, and is due to the employment of children, which is planned and encouraged by the Israeli authorities... Education is disrupted through limited opportunities, lack of funds, closure of schools and expulsion and deportation of teachers".

Rough estimates show a permanent annual drop of nearly 5 per cent in the elementary and preparatory school enrollment and a much higher rate of decline for higher grades. No action is taken to enforce the compulsory primary education law in effect during the pre-occupation period. A West Bank newspaper estimated that less than 65 per cent of all school-age children are enrolled in schools. The rest simply have no places. Efforts by the population to build new schools or enlarge existing ones are generally thwarted by the occupation authorities.

With occupation, the res-

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Economic situation in the Occupied Territories

Stagnation, Labour Exploitation and Brain-Drain

As Israel tries to create "new realities" to serve its declared intention of total annexation by extending its seizures of Arab land in the occupied territories, all aspects of the captive life – but particularly of economic life – in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, are equally geared to serve this objective.

In almost 13 years of what is advertised as a "most benevolent occupation", Israel has succeeded in creating complete economic stagnation and turning the West Bank and Gaza Strip into dormitories for cheap labour employed in its agriculture and industries. It has equally exploited the territories as source of foreign exchange for its crisis-ridden economy.

Economic dependence

The domination of the Israeli economy over the economic structures in the occupied territories and the ensuing damaging effects have caused utmost concern among economists, including those of the United Nations.

A recent report by a special ILO mission to study conditions of workers in the occupied territories, which was presented to the 65th session of the International Labour Conference, discussed the situation in detail.

Among the mission's most alarming findings:

• The markets of these territories have been opened up to the Israeli market and Israel's external tariff imposed on them to protect Israeli products from foreign competition. The result: Absence of any diversification of their external markets. This has led to over 90 per cent of their total imports coming from Israel – creating a trade deficit in 1977 of over 2,542.5 million Israeli pounds (I£) (US$ = 42 I£) in favour of Israel, which is covered by the foreign exchange earnings of Palestinians working abroad. (Present-day figures are much higher).

Unprotected production

• The opening up of the markets had unfavourable effects on the development of certain economic sectors in the occupied territories, especially industry, which is completely exposed since 1968 to Israeli competition: no significant change has occurred in the small industrial sector, which continues to account for considerably less than 10 per cent of the over-all product.

Mainly responsible for this situation are: the complete lack of protection for local products against competition from Israeli products, dependence on Israel for supplies, and the lack of a proper capital market and banking system for loans and investment. (Israeli banks tend to refuse loans and financing for Arab projects in the occupied territories. Insurmountable obstacles are erected to block the import of donations from Arab countries for investment.)

• In the agricultural sector, Arab farmers are hurt by the competition from Israeli agriculture, which has a higher productivity and is sometimes subsidised. (This sector is now threatened from three additional directions: Israeli settlements on seized Arab land which are reducing the total area under cultivation by Arabs; lack of water, as Israel exploits the water resources in the West Bank for its own needs; and acute shortage of manpower due to the use of labour from the occupied territories in Israel itself.)

• There has been a sharp loss of revenue from tourism, the traditionally major source of income for the West Bank, as a result of the annexation of East (Arab) Jerusalem. The city has always been the territories' main centre of activity and the principal touristic attraction because of its holy places and historical sites. Its integration into the economic, fiscal and commercial system of Israel has had a negative effect on the development of the occupied territories. (It is estimated that before the annexation in 1967, tourists spent in East Jerusalem over US$ 21 million annually, the equivalent of about one-third of the West Bank's total imports.)

Employment situation

• The local economy is incapable of creating any new jobs and the local market cannot absorb the increase in the active population which create an employment situation that causes utmost concern. (Out of an estimated population of 1,300,000 in the occupied territories (excluding East Jerusalem) only 146,000 persons were in the labour market of the occupied territories in 1978, i.e., only 23 per cent of the working age population, or less than 70 per cent of the territories' currently employed active population. The remaining 30 per cent are employed in the Israeli economy.)

• The stagnation in the territories' economy due to Israel's squeeze and the lack of employment have led many young men and skilled and professional workers to emigrate in search of employment elsewhere. An estimated 20,000 persons annually have taken this course during the last four years. The effect of this, according to the ILO mission, "is to modify considerably the local demographic structure and to deprive the occupied territories of the most vital elements of its population."

Arab labour in Israel

Equally also disturbing are the ILO mission's findings concerning conditions of workers from the occupied territories employed in Israel, whose number at the end of 1978 was estimated to be 75,000.

These workers, it was learned, "continue to be employed at the lower end of the occupational scale, in many of the more menial temporary or seasonal jobs to which the Israeli labour force seems less and less attracted"; unprotected from loss of their jobs as a result of the instability of the Israeli economy. ("During the 1975 recession in Israel's construction sector for example, some 9,000 (Arab) workers were dismissed without being able to find alternative employment.")

A sizeable percentage of them is employed outside of official channels – over a quarter of the total according to Israel, but much more according to other sources – and is subjected to greater exploitation. As a result "a clandestine market... on which labour is traded as if it were a commodity," has come into being.

A most alarming finding was that "some 20 per cent of the workers form the occupied territories irregularly employed in Israel were minors," who work in agricultural or small industrial production units to sustain their families or augment the family income.

The mission recommended as a remedy that Israel adopt "family-welfare provisions aimed at ensuring maintenance of children, including the payment of children's allowance," which would help families in the occupied territories meet the high cost of living without exposing their minor children to exploitation.

Conditions of employment

Arab workers from the territoires are issued temporary work permits in Israel which they are required by law to renew every four months. Violation means fines and even imprisonment. The permit does not authorise them to reside or sleep in Israel and they are required to return each day to the occupied territories.

This has led the mission to conclude that the total amount of time such a worker spends travalling and at work may be as much as 12 hours, with no additional compensation. The Israeli employers' organisation (Association of Industrialists) rejected a suggestion from the mission that compensation be paid to

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solidarity newsreel solidarity news

U.S. ORGANIZATION APPEALS: SAVE ABU EL–AIN

● The U.S.-based **Palestine Human Rights Campaign** has appealed for urgent action to save Ziad Abu El-Ain, the 19-year old Palestinian on hunger strike since March 29 in Chicago's Metropolitan Prison in the U.S. awaiting extradition to Israel. (See elsewhere in this issue details of his case).

The appeal charged the U.S. judge who heard Ziad's extradition case with gross violation of judicial procedure and said that, if extradited, Ziad will never get a fair trial in Israel.

According to the U.S. Campaign, Ziad has been "denied bail since his arrest last August and judges in his court hearing have refused to allow the introduction of evidence vital to his defence.

Ziad also, reportedly told the prison's Chief physician who was trying to convince him to end his strike: "If I die here in the U.S., I only die once. But if I die in Israel, it will be a hundred times as I watch my family humiliated and tortured under occupation."

● A "Middle East Peace Action Coalition" was recently formed in the U.S. which groups a number of organisations, including the U.S. Palestine Human Rights Campaign. The founding conference of the coalition adopted a resolution which says:

The Camp David accords "did not and cannot bring an end to the continuing conflict in the Middle East. Because it does not recognise basic Palestinian rights, including their right to statehood, Camp David has been rejected not only by the Palestinians, but by the vast majority of the world's nations. Camp David cannot bring peace. It can only exacerbate tensions, prolong the Middle East conflict and further isolation of the U.S. among the nations of the world – all at a cost to the people of the U.S. of $ 10 billion to underwrite only the first year of the pact.

The resolution recognising that Palestinian rights and security are "the key to peace in the Middle East" expressed the determination "to focus attention on U.S. recognition of Palestinian rights as a political issue in 1980 and as a major foreign policy concern." ■

FINNS FOR PLO RECOGNITION

The deputy leader of the Social Democratic group in the Finnish Parliament and President of the Finnish-Arab Friendship Society, Mrs. Tellervo Koivisto, urged the Finnish government to fully recognise the Palestine Liberation Organisation as the sole representative of the Palestine people.

In a question in Parliament to the Foreign Minister, Mrs. Koivisto remarked that recent international developments require that Finland fully recognise the PLO and that at the UN Finland should be more open in its support of resolutions in favour of the PLO.

In his answer, Foreign Minister Väyrynen said that Finland "has on many occasions declared its acceptance of the PLO as the true representative of the national aims of Palestine and that it should be enabled to participate with full authority in negotiations concerning the Near East." He added that the PLO "influence is necessary for achieving a durable and just solution in the Near East."

Minister Väyrynen also said that Finland has been in "continuous contact with PLO representatives" and that it has assured them that the government has no objection to the PLO opening an office in Finland. ■

PROTEST AGAINST STUDENT REPRESSION

The Israeli attack against students in the occupied territories, particularly in Ramallah, Beir Zeit, Abu Deis and Bethlehem (see details in "Diary of Repression") has evoked protest actions in a number of countries around the world.

The International Committee of Solidarity with the Palestinian People sent a telegram to Prime Minister Menachem Begin which said "We strongly protest against Israeli army brutal repression of students and curfew imposed for two months on Al-Jalazoun refugee camp. Demand immediate release of all arrested, end to repression and respect Palestinians' human rights."

Similar protest actions were reported in several other countries, including GDR, Finland, Mexico and others.

Palestinian Prisoners' Day

Despite efforts by the Israeli authorities to prevent any mass action, inhabitants of the occupied territories observed the Day of Solidarity with Palestinian Prisoners in Israeli jails (April 17) on a large scale.

A general strike was observed in all cities, towns and villages of the West Bank and Gaza Strip and several huge mass meetings were held in East Jerusalem, Nablus, Al-Beirah and other localities.

In Nablus, the largest city in the West Bank, thousands gathered at the hall of the municipal park to hear Mayor Bassam Al-Shaka'ah castigate the inhuman treatment of Palestinian prisoners by the occupation authorities.

A statement adopted by the meeting strongly protested against the brutality and neglect to which Palestinian prisoners are exposed and demanded an end to repression and release of all prisoners. The statement appealed to international public opinion to bring pressure to bear on the Israeli authorities to treat Palestinians as prisoners of war. A telegram containing the same demands was sent to UN Secretary General, Dr. Kurt Waldheim.

In *Al-Beirah,* a meeting discussed conditions of Palestinian prisoners in Israel's jails and demanded their immediate release.

At the same time, the authorities ordered Mayors Bassam Al-Shaka'ah (Nablus) and Mohammed Melhim (Halhoul) not to leave their cities until April 20. Both Mayors were invited to address a meeting in Nazareth on April 19, held in connection with the prisoners' day.

Available data indicate that there are nearly 5,000 Palestinian political prisoners in Israel's jails, over half of them serving sentences ranging from 15 years to life imprisonment. Several hundreds of them are women. Recent reports filtering out of prisons speak of many being in critical health due to lack of medical care and inhuman treatment and conditions. Early in April over 150 Palestinian prisoners in Beersheba's desert prison declared a general strike in protest against their inhuman treatment and lack of medical care.

A concerted international action is needed to save the lives of those prisoners whose only crime is to resist occupation – a right guaranteed to them by the resolutions of the United Nations and international law.

Write to the Israeli Defence Minister demanding the improvement of the treatment and conditions of Palestinian prisoners and their classification as prisoners of war; and the release of those sick among them.

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RESOLUTION OF U.N. HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

The thirty-sixth session of the UN Commission on Human Rights has adopted in February 1980 the following resolution:

THE RIGHT OF PEOPLES TO SELF-DETERMINATION AND ITS APPLICATION TO PEOPLES UNDER COLONIAL OR ALIEN DOMINATION OR FOREIGN OCCUPATION

The Commission on Human Rights,

Recalling General Assembly resolutions 1514 (XV), 3236 (XXIX), 3375 (XXX), 3376 (XXX), 32/14, 32/20, 32/40, 32/42, 33/28 and 34/65,

Recalling further Economic and Social Council resolutions 1865 (LVI) and 1866 (LVI),

Reaffirming its resolutions 3 (XXXI), 6 (XXXI), 2 (XXXIV), 3 (XXXIV) and 2 (XXXV),

Bearing in mind the report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian people,

Bearing in mind further General Assembly resolution 32/40 B on the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People,

Reaffirming that the Palestinian people are entitled to self-determination in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and other relevant United Nations resolutions,

Expressing its grave concern that the Palestinian people have been prevented by force from enjoying their inalienable rights, in particular their right to self-determination,

Recalling General Assembly resolution no. 34/65 B which reaffirms the declaration contained in paragraph 4 of its resolution 33/28 A of 7 December 1978, that the validity of agreements purporting to solve the problem of Palestine requires that they be within the framework of the United Nations and its Charter and its resolutions on the basis of the full attainment and exercise of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including the right of return and the right to national independence and sovereignty in Palestine, and with the participation of the Palestine Liberation Organization,

Taking note of paragraphs 52 to 55 of the report of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People,

1. *Affirms* the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to self-determination without external interference and the establishment of a fully independent and sovereign State in Palestine,

2. *Reaffirms* the inalienable right of the Palestinians to return to their homes and property from which they have been displaced and up-rooted, and calls for their return in the exercise of their right to self-determination,

3. *Recognizes* the right of the Palestinian people to regain their rights by all means in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations,

4. *Notes with concern* that the Camp David accords have been concluded outside the framework of the United Nations and without the participation of the Palestine Liberation Organization, the representative of the Palestinian people,

5. *Rejects* those provisions of the accords which ignore, *infringe upon*, violate or deny the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including the right of return, the right of self-determination and the right to national independence and sovereignty in Palestine, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, and which envisage and condone continued Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories and other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967,

6. *Strongly condemns* all partial agreements and separate treaties which constitute a flagrant violation of the rights of the Palestinian people, the principles of the Charter and the resolutions adopted in the various international forums on the Palestinian issue,

7. *Declares* that the Camp David accords and other agreements have no validity in so far as they purport to determine the future of the Palestinian people and of the Palestinian territories occupied by Israel since 1967,

8. *Urges* all States, United Nations organs, specialized agencies and other international organizations to extend their support to the Palestinian people through its representative, the Palestine Liberation Organization, in its struggle to restore its rights in accordance with the Charter,

9. *Requests* the Secretary-General to make available to the Commission on Human Rights and to Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities the reports, studies and publications prepared by the Special Unit on Palestinian Rights, which was established by General Assembly resolution 32/40 B.

STAGNATION, LABOUR EXPLOITATION AND BRAIN–DRAIN

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the workers for abnormally long travel on the grounds that they could only offer their workers remuneration that was directly related to the actual working time.

The mission noted that Palestinian workers feel equal to Israeli workers with regard to deductions from their wages but unequal when it came to benefits. Unlike Israeli workers they receive no old age and survivors pensions, compensation for invalidism, unemployment benefits or children's allowances.

It also detected a growing sense of inequality and alienation among Palestinian workers and the existence of a need for recognition of their identity and personal dignity. It underlined that "it is important that Israeli society should not be encouraged to form and spread a disparaging picture of Palestinian workers which would be constantly thrown in their faces thereby offending their self-esteem".

In short the report shows that as Israel violates all values of equality, freedom and human dignity and extends and tightens its grip over Palestinian territory, its ultimate objective is annexation.

SAVE ZIAD ABU EL-AIN!

A 19-year old Palestinian from the West Bank, Ziad Abu El-Ain, is presently on a hunger strike in the hospital of Chicago's Metropolitan Prison, awaiting extradition to Israel at the request of the Israeli government. If extradited, Mr. Abu El-Ain faces a life sentence in Israel if convicted on the charges against him.

Mr. Abu El-Ain is charged with placing an explosive device in the town of Tiberias on May 14, 1979. The "evidence" produced by the Israeli authorities consists only of a "confession" written in Hebrew and signed in Arabic by a Palestinian in an Israeli jail who does not know Hebrew. The prisoner later retracted his "confession" twice in court, and several persons testified that Mr. Abu El-Ain never left his town, Ramallah, on the day of the explosion.

Before leaving the West Bank to the U.S. Mr. Abu El-Ain applied to the occupation authorities, for permission to leave and in the process of obtaining an exit permit he received a "Certificate of Good Conduct' from the Israeli military government in the West Bank.

In the extradition hearings a U.S. Magistrate ruled against the admissibility of most of the testimony and evidence presented by Mr. Abu El-Ain's defense and ordered that he be extradited. She ruled, for example, that the Defense could not introduce an affidavit signed by the "third party" prisoner whose confession was the sole evidence Israel submitted against Ziad. In it he recants the "confession" and testifies that it was obtained from him under duress. Further, the defense was denied permission to introduce as evidence, affidavits by friends, neighbours, doctors and lawyers who attested to the fact that they saw Ziad in Ramallah on the day the explosive device was placed in Tiberias.

An appeal by the defence after the ruling was turned down and so was a petition for Ziad's release on bail.

On refusal of his appeal, Mr. Abu El-Ain began a hunger strike on March 29. He issued an appeal from his prison cell clearly stating that he is innocent of all charges leveled against him by Israel and vowing to continue his hunger strike until death.

On April 1, attorneys for Ziad went before a Chicago judge to request issuance of an order staying the extradition, pending an appeal to the Court of Appeals.

It is absolutely clear that, once extradited, Ziad Abu El–ain will never get a fair trial in Israel. In the meantime, he continues his hunger strike and his health is deteriorating.

The situation is urgent. Act immediaately to save the life of an innocent person. Write demanding the release of Ziad El-Ain and the dropping of extradition proceedings against him to:

Knute E. Malmborg,
Assistant Legal Advisor for Management
Department of State
2201 C. St., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20520
U.S.A.

THE AUTONOMY PLAN: PERPETUATION OF OCCUPATION

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allowed responsibility, through a "self-governing authority" or an Administrative Council, for agriculture, health, religious affairs, labour and welfare, industry and commerce, finance, transportation and communication, education and culture, administration of justice and local affairs. The Administrative Council is to have no legislative powers and in addition to operating the above-mentioned affairs on a purely local basis, it has the right to issue regulations governing the operation of local matters, to determine the budget and mode of financing of the Administrative Council; to enter into contracts; to sue and be sued in the local courts; and to employ personnel.

Elaborating further on the plan Premier Begin insisted, after meeting President Carter in Washington in April, that both "internal and external" security in the West Bank and Gaza Strip will remain in Israel's hands. He further said at a dinner at the White House in his honour, "We want to keep our promise... of full autonomy" but "even a corridor leading to a Palestinian state" should not be allowed.

A former permanent representative of Israel to the United Nations, Michael Comay, explained the "full autonomy" Premier Begin has in mind. He said in an article in *The Jerusalem Post* (International Edition, April 20–26, 1980) that Israel intends that the military government shall remain in being, and be the source of authority for the Administrative Council, and that autonomy applies to the Arab inhabitants, excluding the inhabitants of East Jerusalem, and not the land.

PALESTINIEN CHILDREN UNDER ISRAELI OCCUPATION

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ponsibility for education was assumed by the Israeli military authorities, who were intent on disrupting the curricula in Arab schools. The first thing they did in the educational field was to scrutinize school curricula. All material referring to the national identity of the Palestinian people was completely deleted. Reference to the Arab role in human culture and history was censored; and all ideas considered to be contradictory to the Israeli ivaders: concepts were banned. Even religious and Arabic language books did not escape this witch-hunt and "mind control" methods.

The results are that children are taught a distorted picture of their own culture and the history of their own people. Their national identity and sense of belonging are completely wiped out.

The quality of education has also suffered tremendously in other ways. A study conducted by the Union of Palestinian Women found that pupils in the occupied territories upon finishing their primary education could hardly read and write properly. The reasons, according to the study, are the shortage of teachers, overcrowded classrooms and lack of funds.

"Occupation is aiming at transforming Palestinian children into an illiterate, poor lot, easy to control and exploit in accordance with the well-known maxim: keep a people ignorant and you can control them", says another report by the Beirut-based Committee for the Defence of Palestinian Human Rights.

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Palestinian children are the innocent victims who suffer most under Israeli occupation. Their tender years make them most in need of security, protection and special care. The sufferings they endure under occupation which we have tried to illustrate in this report, make the duty of people everywhere towards these children enormous. Only through concerted united action can we provide them with the opportunity, with the love and care to which childhood entitles them.

THE PALESTINE SOLIDARITY NEWSLETTER is published by the International Committee of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, P.O. Box 133, 00181 Helsinki 18, Finland, Telex: 12–1680